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NEW DELHI TEHRAN CINCPAC FROM KABUL 22 OCT 73:

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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TAGS: PGOV, PINS, PINT, AF, PK, UR, US

SUBJ: REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT AFTER THREE MONTHS: AN ASSESSMENT

REF: A) KABUL 7332; B) KABUL 6755

SUMMARY: AFTER 3 MONTHS IN POWER DAOUD REGIME STILL SEEMS
COMPELLED TO CONCENTRATE ALMOST ALL OF ITS ENERGIES IN STRUGGLE
TO CONSOLIDATE INTERNAL CONTROL AND ESTABLISH DOMINANCE OF
GOVERNMENT OVER ALL SEGMENTS OF SOCIETY. RESULTANT NEAR PARALYSIS
AND DELAYS IN ECONOMIC DECISION-MAKING ARE HAVING INCREASING EFFECT
ON DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS AND GENERAL HEALTH OF ECONOMY. JOCKEYING
CONTINUES BETWEEN DAOUD AND CENTRAL COMMITTEE WITH PRESIDENT
APPARENTLY GAINING IN STRENGTH. LEFTIST ELEMENTS, MOSTLY PARCHAM
PARTY MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES, HAVE APPEARED IN INCREASING NUMBERS
AT WORKING LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES AND WITH APPARENTLY
INCREASED DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY. FUTURE HAS LARGE POTENTIAL FOR
POLITICAL INSTABILITY BUT OVER SHORT-TERM (NEXT 3 MONTHS) WE
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ANTICIPATE DAOUD REGIME'S REMAINING IN POWER. CONTINUED SIGNI-
FICANT US PRESENCE REMAINS A STATED OBJECTIVE OF TOP GOA LEADERS
BUT LEVEL OF TENSION AND ANTI-FOREIGN FEELING, ESPECIALLY AT TOP
MIDDLE LEVELS, INCREASING AND SOME US PROGRAMS MAY BE SEVERELY

CURTAILED. END SUMMARY.

1. DAOUD STRENGTHENS PERSONAL POWER: OVER PAST MONTH, PRESIDENT HAS APPARENTLY STRENGTHENED PERSONAL POSITION VIS-A-VIS CENTRAL COMMITTEE; BUT ISSUE OF WHO IS IN FACT SUPREME HAS NOT YET BEEN RESOLVED. LARGE SCALE ARRESTS IN AFTERMATH OF ALLEGED MAIWANDWAL PLOT HAVE ESTABLISHED AND ENFORCED FEAR AS INSTRUMENT OF CONTROL OVER BOTH POPULACE AND MILITARY, AND HAS PROBABLY GIVEN DAOUD INCREASED TIME AND ABILITY TO MANEUVER AGAINST RIVALS. (NEITHER DAOUD NOR OTHER TOP GOA LEADERS ADMIT ANY SUCH STRUGGLE EXISTS.) DAOUD HAS DENIED TO CHARGE ANY COMMUNISTS ARE IN GOA, CLAIMING HIS GOVERNMENT CONTAINS ONLY TRUE AFGHAN NATIONALISTS WHO FAVOR MUCH STRICTER AND MORE PERVERSIVE GOVERNMENT CONTROL OVER ECONOMY AND SOCIETY. DAOUD DOES NOT SHARE GENERALLY HELD VIEW THAT PARCHAM PARTY IS EITHER COMMUNIST ITSELF OR SOVIET CONTROLLED (REF A). HE SEEMS SOMEWHAT ISOLATED AND IMPERFECTLY INFORMED, AND WE BELIEVE HE MUST DEFER TO CENTRAL COMMITTEE AT TIMES AND ON SOME ISSUES (WHICH WE CANNOT POSITIVELY IDENTIFY). YET, NO SINGLE SPOKESMAN FOR FACTION OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE OPPOSING DAOUD HAS YET EMERGED NOR BEEN IDENTIFIED BY MISSION ELEMENTS.

2. THIS BRINGS UP ISSUE WHICH CAUSES MUCH OF IRANIAN AND PAKISTANI UNEASINESS OVER DIRECTION OF NEW REGIME, NAMELY EXTENT OF SOVIET INFLUENCE WITHIN GOA. MANY WORKING LEVEL APPOINTMENTS IN GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES HAVE GONE EITHER TO PARCHAM PARTY MEMBERS OR TO OTHERS OF STRONG LEFTIST BELIEFS (SEE PREVIOUS REPORTING). WHILE WE AGREE WITH DAOUD THAT MANY PARCHAM MEMBERS MAY BE ONLY STRONG NATIONALISTS, MUCH EVIDENCE DOES EXIST THAT PARTY LEADERSHIP IS DEFINITELY PRO-SOVIET. PARCHAM LEADER BABRAK KARMAL (EX-DEPUTY IN LOWER HOUSE) HAS ACQUIRED INCREASED INFLUENCE IN GOVERNMENT COUNCILS AND MAY WELL BE BUILDING, WITH POSSIBLE SOVIET ASSISTANCE, NETWORK OF KEY WORKING-LEVEL OFFICIALS IN VARIOUS MINISTRIES WHOSE PRIMARY LOYALTY IS TO HIM AND TO PARCHAM PARTY, NOT TO GOVERNMENT OR TO DAOUD. WHILE LATTER SHREWD ENOUGH TO BE AWARE OF THIS POSSIBILITY AND AT PRESENT STRONG ENOUGH TO BLOCK ANY CONCERTED EFFORT TO CONCENTRATE POWER IN PURELY PARCHAM HANDS, HE PROFESSES NOT TO BE ALARMED BY TREND BECAUSE THESE APPOINTEES ARE "GOOD AFGHAN
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NATIONALISTS" (SEE PRECEDING PARA). WITH PASSAGE OF TIME, LEFTIST (PARCHAMIST) INFLUENCE WITHIN GOVERNMENT WILL PROBABLY SPREAD AND ANY SUDDEN VACUUM AT TOP COULD PRESENT DANGEROUS OPPORTUNITY FOR THIS PRO-SOVIET FACTION TO MAKE BID FOR POWER. KEY FACTOR IN SUCH A SITUATION WOULD BE REACTION OF ARMY, AND ALTHOUGH YOUNGER OFFICER CORPS PREDOMINATELY RUSSIAN TRAINED, THERE ARE POWERFUL ELEMENTS WITHIN MILITARY WHO REMAIN STRONGLY SUSPICIOUS OF AND OPPOSED TO RUSSIAN INFLUENCE. IN ADDITION, RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP AND TRIBAL CHIEFS WOULD PROBABLY BITTERLY OPPOSE ANY OPEN RUSSIAN DOMINATION OF AFGHAN GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS. IN SUMMARY, DEGREE OF LEFTIST

INFLUENCE WITHIN GOVERNMENT WILL MOST LIKELY INCREASE BUT DAOUD WILL CONTINUE TO CHANNEL SUCH INCLINATIONS IN NATIONALIST DIRECTION

RATHER THAN PRO-SOVIET PATTERN. FACT REMAINS THAT NO CIVILIAN, INCLUDING BABRAK, HAS STATURE WITHIN COUNTRY (NOW THAT MAIWANDWAL IS DEAD) TO HOPE TO ACHIEVE SOLID ACCEPTANCE AS LEADER. ONLY POSSIBLE "PEACEFUL" ALTERNATIVE TO DAOUD IS MILITARY OFFICER. WITHOUT DAOUD HOWEVER, SITUATION WOULD BECOME VERY UNCLEAR AND COULD RESULT IN PROTRACTED POWER STRUGGLE BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AFGHAN GROUPS AND SMALL ORGANIZED PRO-SOVIET FACTION UNLESS MILITARY FIGURE MOVED RAPIDLY TO COUNTER POSSIBLE PARCHAMIST MOVE. AT THIS EARLY DATE,

IMPOSSIBLE TO PREDICT OUTCOME OF ANY SUCH STRUGGLE.

3. POTENTIAL FOR FUTURE VIOLENCE STILL HIGH: CRACKDOWN AND ARRESTS SINCE ALLEGED COUNTER COUP HAVE FOR THE MOMENT LESSENED CHANCES OF DIRECT ATTEMPT TO OVERTHROW GOVERNMENT. ARMY HAS BEEN COWED AND LEFT UNORGANIZED BY ARRESTS AND/OR RETIREMENT OF MANY SENIOR OFFICERS WHILE GOVERNMENT HAS USED STATE OF COUNTER COUP EMERGENCY TO COVER SWEEPING ROUND-UP OF ANYONE SUSPECTED OF DISLOYAL THOUGHTS. AS WAS HIS PRACTICE DURING EARLIER RULE, DAOUD HAS BEGUN MAJOR SECRET INTELLIGENCE EFFORT TO PENETRATE ALL POSSIBLE SOURCES OF AFGHAN OPPOSITION, AS WELL AS SEEKING TO IDENTIFY ANY FOREIGN INVOLVEMENT OR ASSISTANCE. TO THIS END MANY AFGHANS EMPLOYED BY FOREIGN EMBASSIES HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED TO ACT AS SPIES FOR GOVERNMENT. REGIME IS NOW RULING LARGELY THROUGH FEAR, BUT SEVERAL POWERFUL GROUPS HAVE BEEN OR REMAIN DISENCHANTED AND COULD BECOME FOCUS OF OPPOSITION:

A) MILITARY: MOST SENIOR OFFICERS HAVE BEEN BYPASSED AND HUMILIATED BY NEW REGIME AND ARE EXTREMELY BITTER. IN ADDITION, MANY ARE GREATLY SUSPICIOUS OF RUSSIAN MOTIVES; AND PROMISES AND
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DELIVERIES OF NEW EQUIPMENT, WHILE USUALLY WELCOME TO ALL ARMED FORCES, COULD INCREASE THEIR DISCONTENT AND SUSPICIONS TO POINT WHERE THEY SEE THEIR VERY EXISTENCE BEING THREATENED. DAOUD IS MOVING TO RETIRE OR SEND AWAY AS AMBASSADORS (OR OTHERWISE NEUTRALIZE) ANYONE CAPABLE OF LEADING A COUNTER COUP BUT SENIOR OFFICER CORPS REMAINS AS A POSSIBLE THREAT, ESPECIALLY IF YOUNGER ELEMENTS WHOSE HOPES NOT FULFILLED BY FIRST COUP SHOULD JOIN THEM.

B) TRIBES: IN EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH SOLID CONTROL OVER COUNTRY SOME OF REGIME'S ACTIONS HAVE DIRECTLY AFFECTED ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF POWERFUL TRIBAL GROUPS. ANTI-SMUGGLING CAMPAIGN AND ARREST OF LEADING MEMBERS OF SHINWARI, AFRIDI AND JAJI TRIBES COULD HAVE STRONG REPERCUSSIONS IN TRIBAL AREAS IF GOVERNMENT MAKES ANY FURTHER MAJOR INCURSIONS IN AREAS OF TRIBAL PRIVILEGE OR HAMRS ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF MAJOR GROUPS. FINAL TREATMENT OF NOW-IMPRISONED ABDUL WALI, EX-KING ZAHIR SHAH'S SON-IN-LAW, LIAISON TO TRIBAL LEADERS, AND STRONG MAN OF PREVIOUS REGIME, MAY BE CRUCIAL. ALIVE IN JAIL OR EXILED ABROAD, HE REMAINS POTENTIAL THREAT, BUT HIS EXECUTION COULD TOUCH OFF PASHTUN BLOOD FEUD. ASSASSINATION OF DAOUD HIMSELF WOULD THEN BECOME REAL POSSIBILITY. IT IS CLEAR THAT DAOUD SENSES POTENTIAL TROUBLE AMONG SOUTHERN TRIBES AND HIS HARD LINE ON PASHTUNISTAN MAY BE CARROT TO OFFSET ECONOMIC STICKS.

C) ECONOMIC INTEREST: IN CONCENTRATING ALL ENERGIES ON SELF-PRESERVATION AND POLITICAL IN-FIGHTING, REGIME HAS NEGLECTED ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS. RESULTANT ATMOSPHERE OF FEAR AND UNCERTAINTY AS TO GOVERNMENT POLICY HAS RESULTED IN SLOW-DOWN OF DEVELOPMENT EFFORT AND DISRUPTION OF DAY-TO-DAY COMMERCE. IMPORTANT BUSINESS INTERESTS HAVE BEEN SEVERELY DAMAGED SINCE JULY 17 COUP AND, IF ECONOMIC SLOW DOWN SPREADS TO PREDOMINANT AGRICULTURAL SECTOR, GOVERNMENT'S BASE OF SUPPORT WILL BE BADLY ERODED.

D) RELIGIOUS: WHILE GOA LEADERS HAVE BEHAVED "CORRECTLY" TOWARD MULLAHS AND ISLAM (ESPECIALLY DURING RAMAZAN), ONLY SUSTAINED OPPOSITION TO REGIME APPEARS BE IN KHANABAD (KUNDUZ PROVINCE) LED BY MUALLAHS. TWENTY-FOUR MULLAHS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED AND TRIED FOR ANTI-REGIME ACTIVITIES; AND 13 OF THESE IMPRISONED. REPORTS INDICATE CONTINUING BUT LOW-LEVEL UNREST IN THIS AREA.

4. FUTURE OF US PRESENCE: TOP OFFICIALS FROM PRESIDENT DOWN TO MINISTER-DEPUTY MINISTER LEVEL CONTINUE TO REITERATE STRONGLY REGIME'S DESIRE FOR CONTINUED US FRIENDSHIP, PRESENCE, AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. HOWEVER, TENSION AND ANTI-FOREIGN SIGNALS OF
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VARIOUS TYPES DEFINITELY ON RISE, AND SOME US PROGRAMS MAY BE CASUALTIES. GOVERNMENT IS MAKING MAJOR EFFORT TO CONTROL AND SURVEIL CONTACTS BETWEEN AFGHANS AND FOREIGNERS AND AS SECOND LARGEST FOREIGN GROUP (AFTER RUSSIANS) AMERICANS COME IN FOR LARGE SHARE OF RESULTANT TENSION AND UNPLEASANT INCIDENTS. WE DO NOT BELIEVE DAOUD WANTS GREATLY TO REDUCE OR ELIMINATE AMERICAN PRESENCE. HE HAS SAID OFTEN OVER THE YEARS THAT STRONG AMERICAN PRESENCE IS POLITICAL REQUIREMENT TO MAINTAIN AN INDEPENDENT AFGHANISTAN. DEP FONMIN WAHID ABDULLAH REAFFIRMED LAST WEEK THAT CORNERSTONE OF AFGHAN FOREIGN POLICY REMAINS PRINCIPLE OF "BALANCE". YET, CONTINUED INSTABILITY AND HEIGHTENED SUSPICION OF OUTSIDERS HAVE NONETHELESS SLOWED MANY AID AND PEACE CORPS PROGRAMS AND SOME MAY WELL HAVE TO BE TERMINATED IF THEY BECOME POLITICALLY UNFEASIBLE (IN EYES GOA LEADERSHIP). THERE IS GROWING EVIDENCE THAT REGIME PREFERS CONCENTRATE FOREIGNER

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